

## Poetry.

### THE WAY.

Show me Thy way, O Lord,  
And yet I fear to tread  
That way of Thine. I dread  
The sorrow, chiding word,  
And pain that must recall  
My wayward soul and teach  
It ever up to reach  
Away from earth, from all  
I hold so dear, to Thee.

Thou art my Father. Still  
From this, Thy way, I shrink.  
I hesitate to drink  
The cup that Thou dost fill,  
My trembling hand I fear  
To place within Thine own;  
Yet, if I walk alone,  
My pathway will be drear,  
And lead away from Thee.

Thou art my Saviour. Can  
I dare to think that Thou  
Who savest me wilt now  
Thy child forsake, nor plan  
With utmost care and love  
To perfect and complete  
To follow Thee above,  
Where I may be like Thee?

O Christ, Thou art the Way!  
And since Love, too, Thou art,  
Take courage, my poor heart!  
If Love shall ever stay  
Thy timid step, and guide,  
Then what to thee is pain  
Or sorrow, what the stain  
Of tears? Thy path beside,  
Shall He not comfort thee?

Thou art the Way. My way  
Hence shalt thou be. I know  
Naught of it now; yet show  
It me, shed but a ray  
Upon that path, and I  
Will be content to bear,  
To wait, to do whate'er  
Thou wilt my soul should try,  
Because Thou lovest me.

—Sundry-School Times.

## Contributions.

### SELFISHNESS.

J. L. GILLIN.

"For none of us liveth to himself."  
Rom. 14: 7.

Wherever the spirit of Christ has not gained an *actual* supremacy, there selfishness reigns. The degree to which this principle dominates the affairs and lives of men is hardly realized, until one takes the record left of Jesus' life and teaching as literally true, and compares with that the thought and life of the average man or woman of the enlightened nineteenth century.

I desire to notice this selfishness or exclusiveness under three aspects, viz., national selfishness, industrial selfishness, and religious selfishness.

In the past, national selfishness appears

in the conception men had of the superiority of the citizens of their own country. Two most notable examples of this is found in the Greeks and the Jews.

In a Greek's thought he and his countrymen were descendants of the gods, and as such, under their special care.

All others were children either of demons (daimonia) or else an inferior class of gods, and as barbarians, merited only their contempt. For the Greeks alone the world was made, for them the clear skies of Greece smiled upon their lovely hills and dipped down to kiss the flower-covered vales; to them only had the gods vouchsafed a sense of the beautiful so exquisite as to make them the artists of the world, indeed, the masters in all the branches of aesthetics.

The god had given them the language of supreme beauty and delicacy of expression. They alone had poetry of worth and philosophy. To them were given graceful bodies and keen intellects, while the barbarians about them were ugly and stupid.

And was not Zeus their father, who with his associates dwelt on the top of Olympus in their own beloved Greece? Was he not the ruler of the sky and the wielder of the thunderbolt?

These were the grounds of a Greek's pride, and, to him, the all-sufficient excuse for his national exclusiveness.

In the mind of a Jew all the Gentiles were worth nothing in God's sight. The Jews were the people for whom God had created the world. Had not God opened the Red Sea for their escape from a life of slavery? Had he not overwhelmed their enemies with the waves of that same sea that had been their help? And had God not driven out the nations that occupied the Promised Land, for their benefit? Looking at it in that light they missed the whole moral force of God's providence over a people for whom he had a divine mission.

In their thought God hated the Gentiles, because he loved them. Hence, it was their duty to treat with the most insolent contempt any Gentile that chanced to come in their path.

The spirit continued, until they had no respect for righteousness, in itself, but worshipped a ceremonial righteousness.

No pitiable agony in a Gentile could touch their sympathy, and no generous kindness shown an unfortunate sinner could wring from them any sign of approval or god-like mercy. This spirit of selfishness dwarfed all life, destroyed all divinity in the soul; repressed with devilish persistence all divine sympathy and throttled the god-given element of love; it wrapped up the soul with its impervi-

ous cloak and with the same cloak shut out the light from the face of God.

But national selfishness did not perish in that past. Its baleful shadow stretches down through the centuries to our day and spreads like a nightmare over the promises of the present. In the standing armies of the nations is an abiding witness to the dominance of selfishness in the affairs of men. In the iron-clad navies, that sail the oceans and lie in the harbors of great nations to keep peace, representing millions of money wrung from the care-wrinkled brow of toiling citizens, are the offerings of our faith to the god of war and blood, and the earnest of our submission to selfishness as the rule of national life. And in no way is it shown more forcibly than by the so called "protective" laws passed by our civilized nations to "protect" them from each other. Really, they are the protective laws of selfishness as a principle of life. They hinder the interchange of valuable lessons and destroy the common life, not of one nation, but of the world.

Industrial exclusiveness is more prevalent than national exclusiveness. Selfishness as a business principle has led men to adopt as their industrial maxim, "Every fellow for himself," which means, "the devil take the hindmost." It leads men to grasp and defraud that they may be preserved, though their fellows go down in bankruptcy. It turns the soul—meant to be the temple of the spirit of love—into an abode for the seven-headed demon of selfishness. It tramples the dictates of conscience beneath its feet; it breaks the bonds of friendship, and before its lust for gain all the holiest and purest emotions of the soul go down in death. It causes strikes by inciting operators to cut wages and laborers to make unreasonable demands. The spirit of selfishness throttles religion, destroys wealth, throws great economic works idle and renders whole communities homeless and without sustenance.

It causes great corporations to oppress the toilers, that great estates with million-dollar mansions may be made by some family, whose only title thereto is the perverted use of God given talents and wealth. It imports cheap laborers to take the place of men whose toil has built up the wealth of the importer.

Its chief weapon is competition, which it declares to be the life of trade, but which really is the waste of wealth and the instigator of the basest crimes. Competition destroys honesty, throttles good faith and is the utterest repudiation of both brotherhood and faith. It causes one merchant to fight his neighbor, and instead of pouring oil and wine into his